

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) A method of handling user's attributes sharing between a plurality of Service Providers, a Service Provider being regarded as an Attribute Provider hosting at least one user's attribute for a user and offering such attribute for sharing with other Service Providers regarded as Attribute Requestors, an attribute offering being published in a Discovery Service Framework suitable for holding attribute offerings from at least one Attribute Provider and for providing any of such attribute offerings to at least one Attribute Requestor, the method comprising the steps of:

the Attribute Provider registering an offering registration trigger in the Discovery Service Framework intended to request, if needed, the registration of the attribute offering;

the Attribute Provider receiving from the Discovery Service Framework a request for registration of the attribute offering;

the Attribute Provider registering an attribute offering in the Discovery Service Framework; and

the Attribute Provider providing the attribute upon request from an Attribute Requestor.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the offering registration trigger is the same for all those users for which the Attribute Provider hosts users' attributes.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the offering registration trigger is different for each user having a user's attribute hosted in the Attribute Provider.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of registering an offering registration trigger in the Discovery Service Framework also includes a step of registering policies intended to govern the lifetime of the offering registration trigger.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of registering an attribute offering in the Discovery Service Framework also includes a step of registering policies intended to govern the lifetime of the attribute offering.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of obtaining a user's consent to share a user's attribute.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the offering registration trigger is withdrawn once the user signs off.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein just the attribute offering, and not the offering registration trigger, is withdrawn once the user signs off.

9. (Original) A method of publishing through a Discovery Service Framework an attribute offering for sharing a user's attribute between a plurality of Service Providers, a Service Provider being regarded as an Attribute Provider hosting the user's attribute for which the attribute offering may be published, the Discovery Service Framework suitable for holding attribute offerings from at least one Attribute Provider, the method comprising the steps of:

registering an offering registration trigger in the Discovery Service Framework upon request from the Attribute Provider;

the Discovery Service Framework processing the offering registration trigger upon request for an attribute offering received from an Attribute Requestor;

requesting the registration of the attribute offering to the Attribute Provider as a result of processing the offering registration trigger; registering in the Discovery Service Framework an attribute offering upon request from an Attribute Provider; and

the Discovery Service Framework providing the attribute offering upon request from a Service Provider acting as an Attribute Requestor for the attribute offering.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the step of registering an offering registration trigger in the Discovery Service Framework also includes a step of registering policies intended to govern the lifetime of the offering registration trigger.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the step of registering an attribute offering in the Discovery Service Framework also includes a step of registering policies intended to govern the lifetime of the attribute offering.

12. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the offering registration trigger is withdrawn upon processing corresponding policies governing its lifetime.

13. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the offering registration trigger is withdrawn upon request from the Attribute Provider where the user signs off.

14. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein just the attribute offering, and not the offering registration trigger, is withdrawn upon processing corresponding policies governing its lifetime.

15. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein just the attribute offering, and not the offering registration trigger, is withdrawn upon request from the Attribute Provider where the user signs off.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~A system~~ An apparatus for sharing user's attributes among service providers in a network, the apparatus ~~system~~ comprising:

a Discovery Service Framework suitable for storing in a local storage holding an attribute offering received from a service provider associated with the network; and

an Attribute Provider for sharing the attribute offering, wherein the attribute offering is registered from the Attribute Provider and the Discovery Service Framework stores data extracted from the attribute offering making it public and accessible for service providers wanting to share such user's attribute, the Discovery Service Framework comprising:

a first input unit for receiving and processing an attribute offering received from an Attribute Provider;

a storage for storing contents obtainable from the attribute offering;

a second input unit for receiving and processing a request received from an Attribute Requestor for the attribute offering; and a first output unit for providing the attribute offering to the Attribute Requestor;

a third input unit for receiving and processing an offering registration trigger received from the Attribute Provider; and

a trigger handler for storing contents obtainable from the offering registration trigger and for determining trigger conditions to request a registration of the attribute offering; and

a second output unit for requesting the registration of the attribute offering to the Attribute Provider; and

an Attribute Requestor, the Attribute Provider and the Attribute Requestor being Service Providers enabled for hosting and sharing a user's attribute.

17. (Currently Amended) The system apparatus of claim 16 wherein the trigger handler determines the trigger conditions upon reception in the second input unit of the request for the attribute offering from the Attribute Requestor.

18. (Currently Amended) The system apparatus of claim 16 wherein the trigger handler is usable for processing policies received in the third input unit and intended to govern the lifetime of the offering registration trigger.

19. (Currently Amended) The system apparatus of claim 18 wherein the trigger handler is usable to withdraw an offering registration trigger upon processing corresponding policies governing its lifetime.

20. (Currently Amended) The system apparatus of claim 16 wherein the trigger handler is usable to withdraw an offering registration trigger upon request received in a fourth input unit from the Attribute Provider where the user signs off.

21. (Currently Amended) The system apparatus of claim 16 wherein the trigger handler is usable for processing policies received in the first input unit and intended to govern the lifetime of the attribute offering.

22. (Currently Amended) The system apparatus of claim 21 wherein the trigger handler is usable to withdraw an attribute offering upon processing corresponding policies governing its lifetime.

23. (Currently Amended) The system apparatus of claim 16 wherein the trigger handler is usable to withdraw an attribute offering upon request received in a fifth input unit from the Attribute Provider where the user signs off.

24. (Currently Amended) An Attribute Provider in a network for hosting a user's attribute for a user and for sharing the attribute with Attribute Requestors, the user's attribute being published in a Discovery Service Framework suitable for storing holding attribute offerings from Attribute Providers and for providing the attribute offerings to Attribute Requestors, the Attribute Provider comprising:

a first output unit for sending an attribute offering to accessing the Discovery Service Framework ~~to register an attribute offering~~;

a first input unit for receiving and processing a request received from an Attribute Requestor for sharing the attribute offering;

a second output unit for sending providing the attribute offering to the Attribute Requestor;

a third output unit for sending an offering registration trigger to accessing the Discovery Service Framework to register an offering registration trigger; and

a second input unit for receiving and processing a request received from the Discovery Service Framework for registration of an attribute offering.

25. (Original) The Attribute Provider of claim 24 wherein the third output unit is used for accessing the Discovery Service Framework to register policies intended to govern the lifetime of the offering registration trigger.

26. (Original) The Attribute Provider of claim 24 wherein the first output unit is used for accessing the Discovery Service Framework to register policies intended to govern the lifetime of the attribute offering.

27. (Original) The Attribute Provider of claim 24 further comprising: a fourth output unit for requesting a user's consent to share a user's attribute; and a third input unit for obtaining the user's consent to share a user's attribute.

28. (Original) The Attribute Provider of claim 24 further comprising a fifth output unit for accessing the Discovery Service Framework to withdraw an offering registration trigger upon the user signing off.

29. (Original) The Attribute Provider of claim 24 further comprising a sixth output unit for accessing the Discovery Service Framework to withdraw an attribute offering upon the user signing off.

30. (Original) The Attribute Provider of claim 24 wherein the third output unit is used to register in the Discovery Service Framework a same offering registration trigger for all those users for which the Attribute Provider hosts users' attributes.

31. (Original) The Attribute Provider of claim 24 wherein the third output unit is used to register in the Discovery Service Framework a different offering registration trigger for each user having a user's attribute hosted in the Attribute Provider.

32. (Original) The Attribute Provider of claim 24 wherein the third and first output units are used to register the offering registration along with an actual attribute offering.